

VOLUME XXIII - NUMBER 5 - MAY/JUNE 2005

1937
Buick
1938

TORQUE TUBE

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS PUBLICATION
FOR MEMBERS OF THE 1937-1938 BUICK CLUB



1937 BUICK RESTORATION

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A HUB FOR HUBCAPS

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Expanded Classified Section!

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Please send all mail to:
TORQUE TUBE
P.O. BOX 21000
OAKLAND, CA 94620
USA

You can reach editor Mark Jordan at:
415-203-4180
torquetube3738@yahoo.com

Editor: Mark Jordan (#1297)
Asst. Editor: Giancarlo Davis (#1748)
Proofreader: Thomas Burchfield (#1776)
Design & Layout: Tanoa Stewart (#1823)

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9TH Buick CYLINDER



Torque Tube
2004 Golden Quill Winner

Good news! Torque Tube has won a 2004 Golden Quill Award from Old Cars Weekly Magazine. I would like to thank all of our members that contributed articles and information for us to put the Torque Tube together. Please keep up the good work; we always need our members' support. Wining the award is not that easy. Some of the criteria include: 1) We are balanced and offer club members the necessities for the hobby; 2) We make a respectable appearance; 3) Time and effort are reflected in the pages; 4) High standards in accuracy and in story selection.

Wayne Miller (#1870), a new member, sent Torque Tube the picture below of his newly-bought '37 being dropped off. Thank you Al Bell (#1061) for telling Wayne about our club. Wayne says the car is in relatively good shape but will need a little TLC. Wayne jokes that he is going to buy a period chauffeur's costume so he can drive his wife in the back seat and drop her off at Wal-Mart.



Verne Chritchfield (#1624) sent in a few pictures (next page) of his '38 Limited. The second owner as of 1996, Verne now is currently restoring the car back to its former self. He is very grateful to Ernest Zocchi (#83) and Dave Tacheny (#997) for helping him get it back on the road.

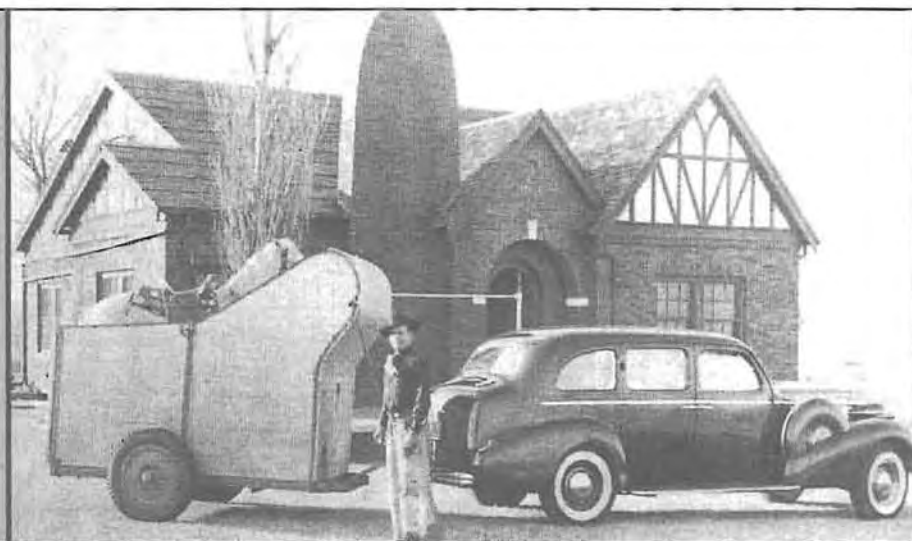
An interesting thing about this car is that it was shipped to Italy in 1938 and towed a trailer of goods from there into Germany, where it was painted green from its original color of dark gray.



After that it went into Russia and was then sent back to the U.S. in 1939. It would be interesting to find out what it was hauling through those countries. Anyway, good luck, Verne! We are all here to help you out!



Anthony Wright (#1192) sent in this historical photograph (below) of the great western swing musician, Bob Wills, in front of his "Big House" in Tulsa, OK in 1940. If you notice Bob used a 1938 Buick to tow around his beloved horse, Punkin. Bob Wills, referred to as "the best damn fiddle player in the world," by Merle Haggard, is the legendary band leader and composer from Turkey, TX. Wills became the "King of Western Swing" with his dynamic combination of New Orleans jazz, blues, and folk fiddle music. He and his bands, the most famous being the Texas Playboys, swept the country off its feet with favorites like "San Antonio Rose," "Faded Love," and "Take Me Back to Tulsa." His music was so popular in the early 1940's that his records sold better than other recording artists at that time. Wills was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville, and is the only performer, other than Gene Autry, to have been voted into the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City. Wills' legendary status was not only achieved through his music, but also on the big screen. His popularity escalated in the early forties when he and his band made more than a dozen cowboy movies. Although Bob Wills died on May 13, 1975, his musical influence lives on in much of today's country music.





Anthony also sent in two more historical pictures. This photograph, c. 1944, by Charles Teenie, was part of a documentation of African-Americans in Pittsburgh, PA. In it you can see a '38 Buick zooming by.

In this picture, taken in Italy at the Piazza del Campidoglio, you can see a '37 Buick on the right during a fascist celebration of the fourth anniversary of the Italian Empire. The photo was taken by Carl Mydaus in Rome in 1940.



Once again thank you for all your support and help with the magazine. Please always feel free to send us your ideas, opinions, and stories. We really have something to be proud of.

Happy Motoring,

Mark

1937 BUICK CENTURY

Two-time owner restores his old Model 61 with Dave Lewis to a new level

Story and photos by Jeff Koch

Reprint courtesy of Hemmings Classic Car, a publication by Hemmings Motor News



It is funny how time loops back around and kicks you in the pants. When this Buick was new and contemporary, in 1937, this was an E-ticket ride. An all-steel body made for a more solid driving environment, torquey straight-eight power created healthy acceleration, and pricing actually dipped into six-cylinder territory. Now, nearly 70 years on, we look back on this car, arguably a milestone in the development of the automobile, not only for its clean art-deco style and flowing lines, but also its early performance



credentials. With a full-size eight-cylinder engine in a mid-size body, one could argue that it was a prototypical muscle car decades before the concept was popularized.

In the early 1960's, though, it was just a 25-year-old car—not a true Classic as defined by the snooty crowd, nor terribly rare thanks to a record production of 220,000 built in 1937 alone. It was particularly plentiful in California where Buick was hitting record sales numbers, and was perhaps not looked at the differently than we might view a car from 1980 today. In terms of performance and keeping up with traffic in day-to-day driving, the hottest 1937 Buick was far from what even the lowliest small-displacement V-8 family car in 1962 could manage off the showroom floor. No, the '37 Century was just an old car at that point. Even kids could afford to drive 'em.

Jack McMillan (#725) of Los Angeles was one of those kids. "I bought this car in 1962, at age 19," he says. "It was my first car. After nine years of abuse and neglect, the rear end gave out. I gave it away in 1970." It was nicely optioned for a beater: It had the sidemount spare tire option, a radio, a second speaker, and the deluxe heater. In the late 1980s, Jack got a hankering for something vintage and wanted an old Buick like the one he had. "I answered an ad in Hemmings—the car was in Denver, and I was in Southern California. It was rough, though it had no serious rust, and it ran. There were minor dents in the fenders, and the interior, chrome, glass, rubber, woodgraining, gaskets, and plastic were all shot. But only the rear bumper gravel deflectors and the rear window shade were missing—it was very complete.

Wood trim on dash and doors belies the highly advanced, first-year, all-steel body.



This was the look of elegance in the 1930s: ivory steering wheel, shift knob and auxiliary control knobs, big speaker grille, and clean chrome ornamentation.

"So I drove it home. Fluids leaked, there was half a turn of slop in the steering, the tires were bald . . . and when I hit the Rockies, I discovered that the wipers didn't work! It took me four days to get home. Once back in L.A., Jack discovered that he had quite unknowingly found the very same car that he gave away at the dawn of the 1970's! A piece of a Harley decal he had put on the window gave a hint, but he figured that millions of decals had been made, so the odds that another made it on a Buick were pretty good.

Then he saw the trailer hitch. "Back in the 1960s, I welded a rusty piece of angle iron to the rear crossmember to make a trailer hitch, so I could tow my Harley to a magazine photo shoot. I was running late, and the sloppy weld annoyed my buddy, Carey McKenzie, who is used to doing premium work. Anyway, upon getting the car home from Denver, I found that someone had long ago cut off that ugly hitch, but that ugly angle iron weld was still attached to the rear crossmember. 'Twas only upon finding the remnants of that hitch that I figured out I had put it there. I called Carey to come over and check it out—he was as amazed as I was! I had no choice but to do a complete frame-up restoration to a car that deserved it!"

And this is where Jack's learning curve got really steep. "My first restorer was a local guy who was recommended to me by the owner of a 1937



Visually crusty, but mechanically sound, its last run before removal got owner Macmilian home to Los Angeles from Colorado



The only rot on this car was around the base of the firewall: this bodywork was completed prior to moving to Dave Lewis's shop



Everything up front worked, but was desperately worn: steering had half a turn of slop, making the drive home quite the handful

Roadmaster Phaeton whom he had found in his guys shop and liked his work." Jack took the recommendation at face value and dropped off his Century. Big mistake. "The restorer seemed nice enough, but I had no experience with restoration shops, and I believed everything that he told me. I should have known something was amiss when he moved his location twice in about six months; he said it was to get more space for projects." Still, he received photos of what appeared to be his completely restored engine and cooling system to assuage his fears.

"Eventually, I got a call from the guy who recommended him in the first place; he told me that the shop went bankrupt and that I'd have to identify my car and all of its parts (He also wanted me to join him in a lawsuit against the restorer.) I visited the shop after it was closed up and spoke to someone there who was in the same position as myself. His 1941 Cadillac was also being restored. From his comments, I learned that the shop owner lost everything and had nothing to sue for, so I decided to save additional lawyer fees by sucking it up and figured that I had learned a valuable lesson." Along with the remnants of his '37 Century, he also ended up with a single 1941 Cadillac brake drum, which made pushing the bare chassis around somewhat tricky.

During the chaos, Jack started doing some research; all signs pointed to Dave Lewis (#237) Restorations in Springfield, Illinois. "I had previously seen a couple of his restorations, which were wonderful, and I also learned that he was the founder of the 1937-1938 Buick Club. He knows more about these cars than anyone! So I moved my rolling chassis to a storage lot a couple blocks away, called Dave, explained my situation, and made a verbal agreement on the phone." It was promptly shipped to Illinois.

You'd think that there would be some time advantage, since the car was already in pieces, but taking hold of a started project can eat up more time than disassembling an intact car. Lewis actually had a big task ahead of him with Jack's childhood Buick. "Dave did an entire tear-down and rebuild. Some of the bodywork done by the other guy was acceptable, but not knowing what was, or wasn't, under the primer and paint, meant everything needed to be redone."

What Lewis found was frightening. "The radiator was indeed a mess!" There were literally pounds of sediment in the bottom of the visually fresh, but internally rotten, radiator. "Also, the rear end was not rebuilt, and none of the interior components were rebuilt; these included the door and window crank mechanisms, trunk hinges, knee action shocks, dashboard instruments, and also the brakes. I also recall paying for rebuilding

the steering box, which wasn't done." Dave Lewis eventually did it. Adds Jack, only half-joking, "Thanks for the memories."

Once disassembled, the entire body was chemically stripped with aircraft paint remover, except for the doorjambs and under the decklids, which were sandblasted down to bare metal; the gelatinous stripper can get caught and hide in hidden body contours and wreak untold havoc if sprayed over, so the less-exposed areas of the body got a silica-sand material blast. The body remained attached to the frame, and two coats of black DuPont Imron urethane were sprayed on the underside.

For the body, a single coat of DuPont Color Epoxy on the bare metal was a start. Multiple coats of DuPont high-build blocking primers were added—different bits of the body required different amounts of material—and sanded with 1500 grain paper between coats.

Two versions of the Buick's original Windsor Grey color were mixed; DuPont Centari enamel with hardener for the doorjambs, firewall, and under the fenders and decklid; and DuPont basecoat lacquer for the rest of the body. "Lacquer sprays on fairly dull until you wet-sand and buff it," says Dave Lewis, "and you cannot wet-sand and buff all the crevices in the doorjambs, firewall, under the fenders, and under the decklid. So we used enamel to get a nice high gloss with no clearcoat needed. And the lacquer won't wrinkle the enamel with the hardener in it." So why not just do the whole car in enamel? "Lacquer is more original," says Lewis, "and it offers a better look than basecoat/clearcoat. I liken it to a patent leather shoe versus a natural leather shoe. Patent leather is like basecoat/clearcoat—very highly polished—versus natural leather, which is more like lacquer. It's also more easily fixed. I can repair a spot on a door with lacquer, whereas with a basecoat/clearcoat system, I could fix the color and then have to have the whole door cleared."

For the main sections of the body, including the door skins, the hood, and the trunk lid, Dave started with six color basecoats of lacquer, then topped it with ten coats of clear acrylic lacquer. "I let it cure for two to three days, then applied an 800 grade wet-sand and a 2000 grade wet-sand. I let it cure for two weeks, then buffed it out. That's the final surface." The inner fenders and under the hood utilized RM's #866 flat black lacquer. "It's called flat black, but it actually comes out semi-gloss, and approximates the original factory look."

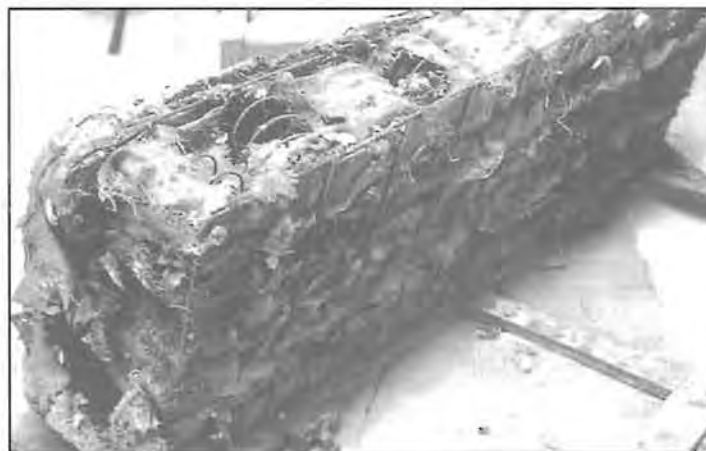
"The engine had been rebuilt previously," says Lewis, "but it had sat in a gravel parking lot at the other place. So, I pulled the cylinder head and the oil pan." Beyond that, though, everything was in excellent working order. Cosmetically, eve-



All of the factory chrome, still present all these years later, was rounded up, stripped, and sent off for replating



The chassis was sprayed black and taped off prior to the body coats, which started with several coats of blocking primer



This crusty front seat frame was actually an improvement on the one that was in the car when Jack bought it



Contoured door handle features a grace in shape and detail unmatched on today's cars



Clock manages to keep perfect time. Mechanism eats up glove box space though



There's more style in this bit of trim than there is in an entire contemporary SUV



Dash-mounted radio speaker looks like a heater, but the heater is hiding under the dash

rything was refinished to like-new, down to zinc-plating the bolts.

Four years and 1,500-plus man-hours, the result sits unfurled before you. Had anyone told us that this regularly-driven Buick was a fresh resto-

ration, we wouldn't have doubted it for a second. Color us shocked, then, when Jack tells us that he took possession back from the restorer more than 10 years ago! He has put an average of 3,000 miles a year on his Century—he's now owned it longer in

OWNER'S VIEW

"This is a wonderful car that can easily keep up with traffic all day," says owner Jack Macmillan. "Plenty of parts interchange throughout the life of the Straight-8 (1931 to 1953) - and they're easy to find. Glass was pretty simple to locate too. I had a time finding the rear bumper gravel deflector and the front seat cushion spring.

"These models, with their crisp, classic lines, are to this day considered by some to be the best Buick ever achieved; the design of the 1937 was the epitome of style and was huge in the industry. If I had to do anything differently, I would have added a leather interior; though this car didn't come with it.

"I just wanted a dependable, relatively unusual-looking driver. After I found out it was my old car that I'd given away years before, I had no choice but to do a frame-up restoration."

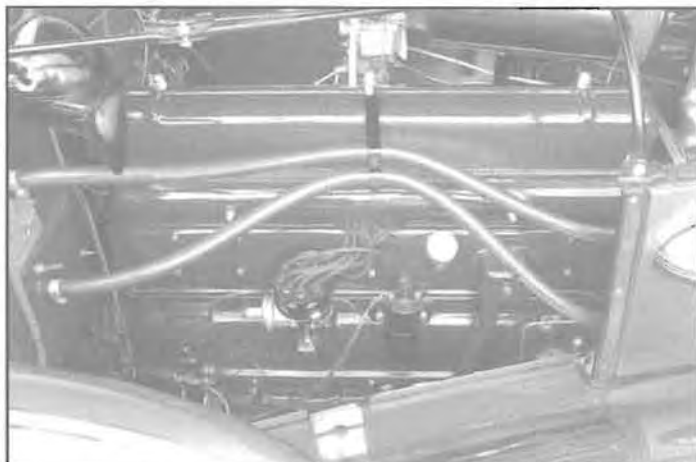




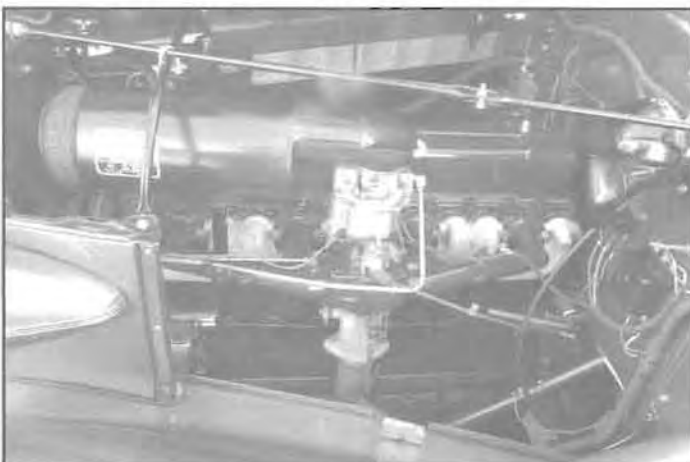
Behind this ornate grille badge lies the legendary valve-in-head Buick Straight-8



Side-mount spare '37 Buicks sport a cavernous truck; others sport a shallow shelf



There's easier access to the engine than in later models; credit attached hood sides




Air cleaner attaches to the exhaust manifold via a very long bolt



Car is restored with factory cloth, but owner is mulling a switch to '37's optional leather.

like-new shape than he did when he was younger, when it was good enough for government work, so to speak. It's long enough time for him to get to know it well. We wouldn't classify it as regret, but the one area that Jack has thought about changing is the upholstery. "It's got the correct gray Bedford cloth that it came with originally," he says, though he hastens to point out that it's aftermarket material. "But leather upholstery was an option in 1937." Though we wouldn't touch a thing, the cowhides may yet make an appearance.

One thing that is gone, and shall remain, so is that telltale bit of angle iron, welded on all those years ago: It was removed, and all traces of that slapdash welding job smoothed out. "I probably should have kept it on there," says McMillan, "but I wasn't thinking that far ahead." 



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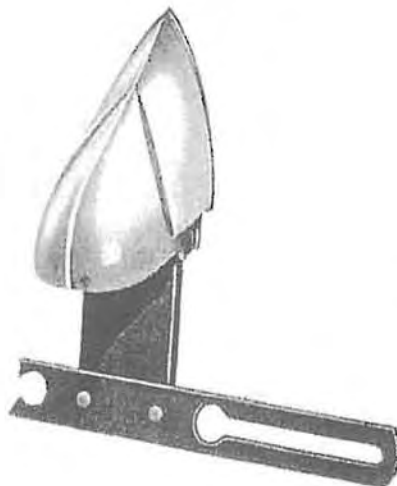
CENTER TRUNK LIGHT

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ELECTRIC VANITY MIRROR

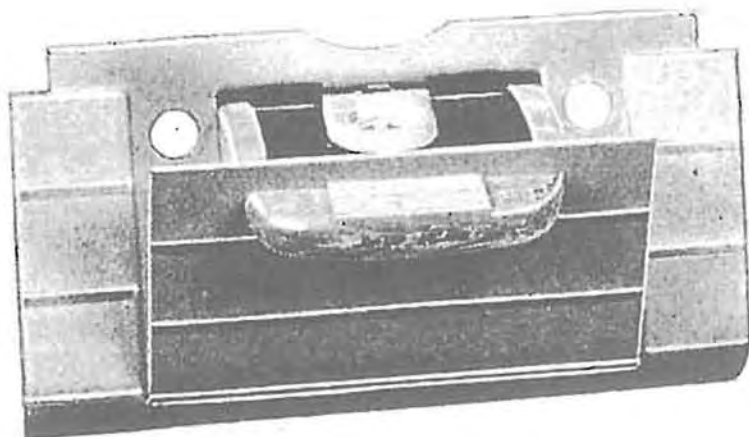
Used like other mirrors by day, by night a glowing light gives perfect reflection. Useful as a flashlight for finding misplaced articles. Fits in glove compartment of all cars.

Price \$2.50



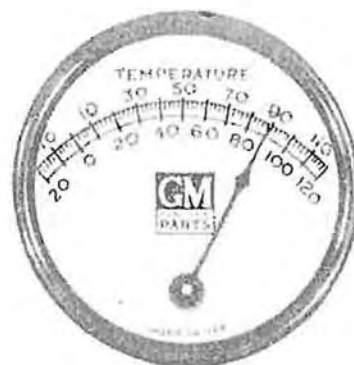
BRAKE LEVER EXTENSION

A handy accessory that makes it easy to put on and release the emergency brake—brings it within easy reach of any driver. For 1938 and past GM cars. Price \$2.50



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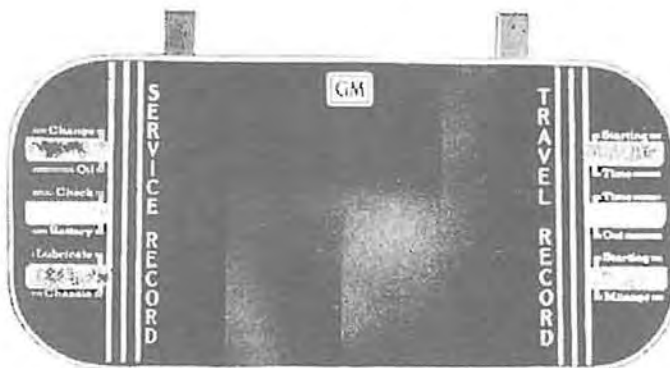
For all General Motors cars.

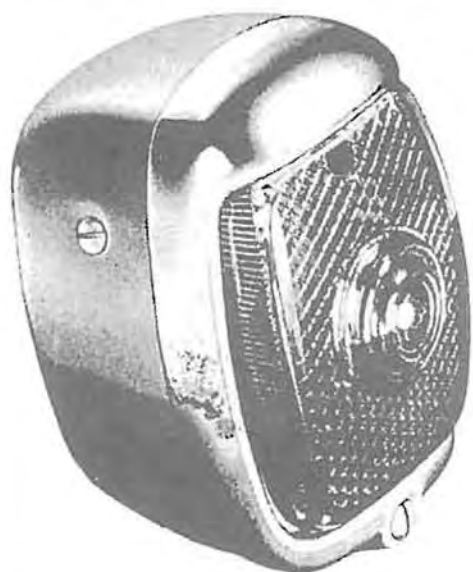
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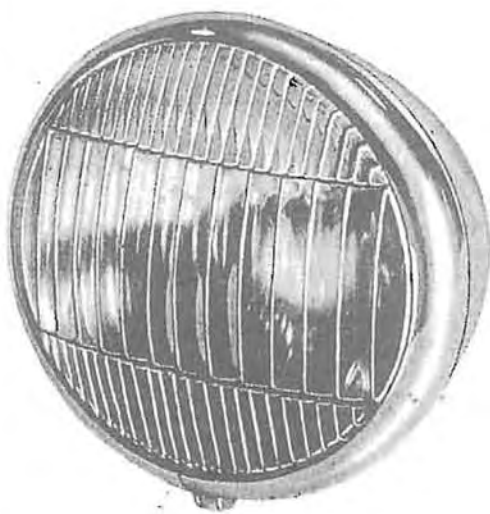
Price \$1.00





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A stream of water supplied from a tank mounted under the hood is forced by vacuum to both windshields. Operated by depressing button on dash. Only attention needed is occasional refilling of water supply tank. Special non-freezing fluid available for winter. For all 1938 models.

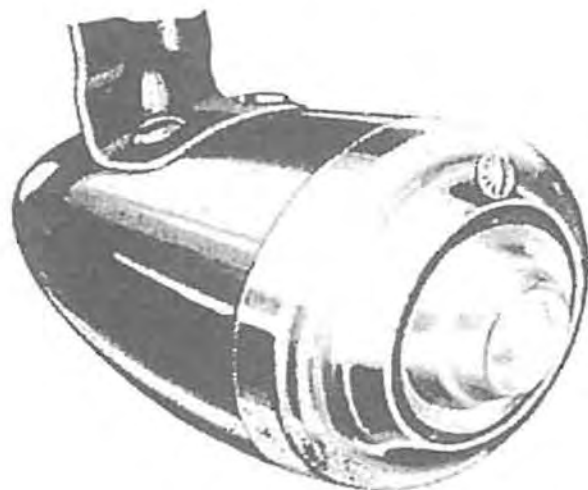
Price \$5.90.



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Provides sufficient light at rear for safe backing at night. Matched to fit at base of left-hand tail lamp on 1937-38. Price

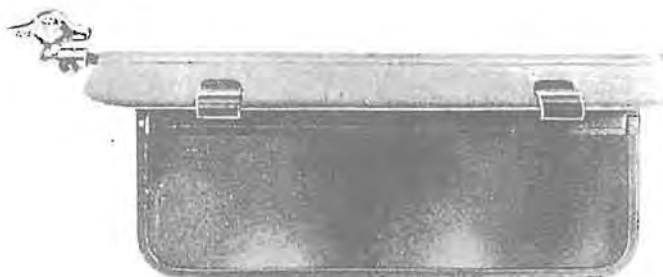
\$3.00





PEEP MIRROR

A 3/12" mirror fitting close to the car, with swivel joint permitting any adjustment. Fastens to door. Eliminates the "blind spot" at the rear on driver's side. Chrome plated case and bracket. Price \$1.90



SUN VISOR GLARE SHIELD

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GM AUTO RADIO—MASTER MODEL

Canada's supreme seven - tube, two - unit car radio. Employ's the latest tubes and circuit designs. Has maximum sensitivity with either type of GM aerial. Delivers crystal clear tone in great volume from the sturdy 8" dynamic speaker. Has automatic volume control, tone control, seven ultra-modern tubes, interference eliminator, low current drain and all of the most modern features. Fits all models. Price complete with control head and running board aerial from \$79.50 (Western Canada from \$82.50)



A special offer now available for the
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The 1937-1938 Buick Club LICENSE PLATE BADGE



'Plate Mates' and The 1937-1938 Buick Club have teamed up to bring you these custom-crafted license plate badges. They are exclusively designed with "The 1937-1938 Buick Club" name and logo.

The club's logo appears in its distinctive colors - red, white and blue with a gold border. The oval format is reminiscent of authentic antique plate badges.

These badges are carefully crafted from a high-quality heavy brass and finished with a clear gloss baked epoxy.

An added attraction to any BUICK, these plate badges are only available here through this publication!

A portion of the sales will be donated to the 1937-1938 Buick Club. Take this opportunity to adorn your antique Buick for **only \$19.95.** (shipping and handling included).

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1937 - 1938 BUICK CLUB EASTERN MEET & TOUR



June 13th - 16th, 2005

Kawartha Lakes Inn, Lindsay, Ontario, Canada

Room rate: \$69.95 per night. Please mention the '37-'38 Buick Club Meet when making your reservations directly with the motel. A block of rooms is reserved until April 30, 2005.

Your hosts

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25 York Street, RR #1
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Phone: 905-473-9557

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K9V4R4

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Fax: 705-324-9121

2005 EASTERN MEET REGISTRATION

NAME(S) _____
ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____
YOUR CAR: YEAR _____ MODEL _____

Registration Fee..... \$ 10.00

MONDAY JUNE 13:

ARRIVAL DINNER _____ # persons

TUESDAY JUNE 14:

LIFT LOCK EXCURSION _____ # persons X \$14.00 ea. \$ _____

CANADIAN CANOE MUSEUM _____ # persons X \$6.00 ea. \$ _____

DINNER.....Buffet Style _____ # persons X \$20.00 ea. \$ _____

WEDNESDAY JUNE 15:

2 1/2 Hour LUNCHEON CRUISE _____ # persons X \$35.00 ea. \$ _____

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_____ # persons X \$25.00 ea. \$ _____

BANQUET.....Roast Beef _____ # persons X \$18.00 ea. \$ _____

.....Chicken _____ # persons X \$18.00 ea. \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

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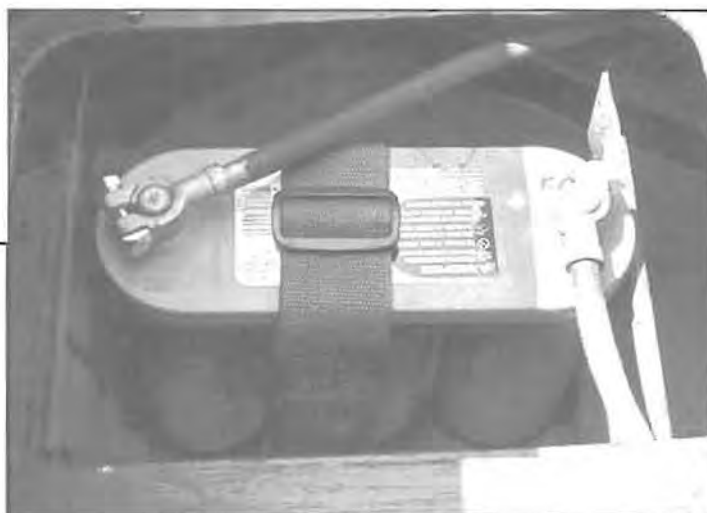


TECHNICAL TIPS

SLOW 6 VOLT CRANKING

By Frank Freda (#1838)

Fellow member Mike Dillard (#1011) suggests the following: Remove the starter, sandpaper the bell housing and starter mating surfaces. Also disassemble the starter and sandpaper both surfaces on the starter center section. Install a ground cable directly from the battery to the side bolt on the



starter. Also don't forget to purchase an Optima battery for \$117 on-line as referred to me by Harry Logan (#651). This battery is half the size and weight of the standard battery, but packs 800 cold cranking amps, more power than I had ever expected. It also can be easily moved from car to car because of its lightweight. Because it's a jell cell, the shelf life is claimed to be 6 months or longer without charging. Now my car cranks twice as fast and has plenty of voltage to fire the coil.

ELECTRONIC IGNITION QUICK NOTE

With a good thing like electronic ignition, one must remember that it takes 5.2 volts at the coil in order to fire it. This is not easy to achieve all the time with a standard battery and poor ground connections along the way. However, with mechanical points, it takes less voltage to fire the coil.

REPLACE THE OIL PUMP FLOAT PICK UP

TECHNICAL TIPS

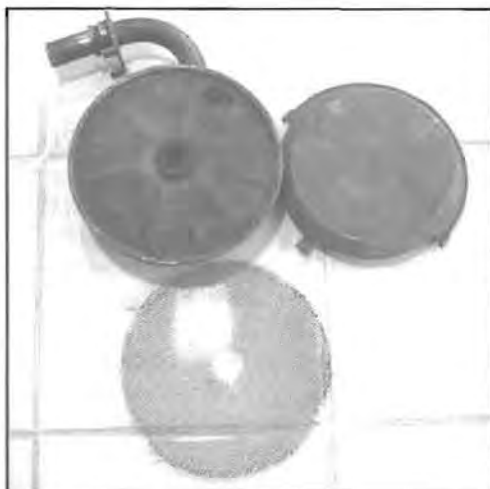


By Frank Freda (#1838)

Continued on page 17 →

The most difficult part of this job is to find a small piece of stainless steel screen. This can be found in an inexpensive small kitchen strainer. Chose the mash size you like. Cut it out with a good pair hardened steel scissors you can buy for a buck nowadays. Remove the metal shield from the old float, bend back the folded edges with a

screwdriver that hold the old screen in place and remove the screen. Place the float on the new screen; mark with a marking pen. Cut out the circle install screen in



the float, use a pair of pliers to bend over the edges, trapping the new screen. Reinstall the metal shield and you're done. Cost about \$5 at the 99Cents store.



TECHNICAL TIPS

By Frank Freda (#1838)

RUMBLE SEAT DOOR LOCKED & CAN'T GET IT OPEN?



In most cases, this is because the handle turns and does not release the lock. You also may have lost the key. The following can be done with no damage to the car. On the package tray behind the driver

seat, pull up the lower part of the top material below the rear window. Next climb into the package tray, laying on your side, pull back the trim panel and, with a screwdriver, push in the upper portion of the rumble seat panel just below the latch. At this point you will see the rumble seat door latch about eight inches away. Get Someone to pull on the closed rumble door, while you use a screwdriver to push in the slide part of the latch releasing the door. Once the door is open you can service any part that's necessary.



BUICK AND FLXIBLE BUS MEMORIES

Story and Photos
by Samuel Mahle (#1167)

In the late fifties, I had the opportunity on many occasions to travel from my home town of Clarion, Pennsylvania, on the Ritchey Bus Line to hookup with a Greyhound Bus in Pittsburgh to continue my travel into Ohio. The manufacturer of the Ritchey bus was the Flxible Company of Loudonville, Ohio. The model that I traveled on was the post war version developed to stave off the decline in intercity travel brought on by the use of automobiles and airlines. Although this bus had been in use for many years, it was still in a very serviceable condition, and I can tell you that Buick engine sure did sound impressive to this teenage kid.

This "New Clipper Model" had a new front end with curved windshields, with new large sealed-beam headlights that were mounted alongside fog lights in an aluminum casting, which gave this new model a new improved appearance. The Flxible nameplate emblem was located just below the windshield. The model that I traveled on was a twenty-nine passenger unit and had a center aisle with two seats on each side, and a rear seat that



spanned the whole distance from wall to wall in the rear. This rear seat was located close to the engine, and I would sometimes sit there in order to better hear the engine as the bus worked its way across the Allegheny Mountains, with the different sounds of shifting gears and rpm's that were soothing to the ear.

What was the connection between Flxible and Buick? It was none other than the venerable Buick FB 320 engine. This engine had been used since the Clipper was brought out onto the market in 1939. It was not without its problems, as so of-

ten is the case in something that is new. Some bus owners were having all kinds of problems with piston burn through. So, the head of the piston was made thicker and the head gasket was a single-sheet type without the asbestos filler. These changes among others, had brought this engine, by 1941, into a durable unit which required little maintenance. One of the maintenance innovations was a unique feature: a slide-out engine assembly. The engine assembly was on a frame that slid out from the rear of the bus for ease in servicing. The Buick engine was used up to the 1950s, when the Hercules diesels were brought into use due to the lower cost of diesel.



There is a much longer history available by the website: www.prewarbuick.com/id256.htm. It tells of the founder Hugo Young's motorcycle sidecar business that branched off into funeral cars, then to buses constructed on the Buick Master Six chassis of the 1920's and finally into the eventual association with Charles Kittering, who was both General Motors vice president at the same time he was chief financier of Flxible and its president.



A Hub For Hubcaps

by Torque Tube Staff

Hubcaps are more than two pairs of shiny round automotive decorations. To Bill Hirsch, owner of New Jersey's Bill Hirsch Automotive, cruising around town in a nice vintage car with dull or worn hubcaps is "like putting on a new suit but wearing dirty shoes." Bill, then, is working as a kind of automotive cobbler, creating hubcaps for older cars (and for Buicks, 1938s only) and making them shine like a pair of new wing-tips on a bright afternoon.

The beginnings of his business had, oddly enough, to do with his lack of having the correct kind of engine paint for his Packard. "The guy that was working on my Packard came to me and said he needed more green engine paint. The hardware store didn't carry high temperature paint, nor the shade of green I needed. I told him that I didn't know where to get it." Bill, however, happened to own a Cessna Jet, and consulted his plane mechanic instead. The mechanic referred him to a paint factory in a town nearby. "I went and met the president and owner (who, incidentally, was a World War I pilot and was the inventor of the gas mask). He told me that he could make it for me, but no less than ten gallons. When I asked him what I should do with the remainder, he tells me to put it in quart cans and sell it to other people. So I advertised that paint at three bucks a can and it sold almost overnight. Soon, people were asking me for Ford, Oldsmobile, Buick, and Pontiac colors."


Inspired by his success with engine paints, and lacking certain necessary parts for his Packard, Bill then moved into manufacturing hubcaps. The story was similar. "When I was looking for other parts for my Packard, I found a guy in Switzerland that owned a small shop that could make anything as long as you brought him a model. If it was a hubcap, then you would need to bring him a wheel

that the hubcap could fit in to so he could make sure that it fit properly. And I really only needed a piece here and there, but the guy couldn't do that, but he did say 'I can make ten each. And you can sell them to somebody else!'"

His reproduction hubcaps for 1938 Buicks are better than the originals, he insists, because of their quality and durability. "The reproductions are better than the originals, because the originals were a shell with a thin brass cover crimped on them. That thin brass cover would get little dings in them, and if you wanted to get the things replated you literally had to get somebody to take the brass cover off, then strip the chrome off the brass cover and then take the little dings, out then put

the little brass cover back on again and then get it chrome plated. By the time it was done, it was cheaper to get a brand new hubcap. What to do is make them right through one piece of steel: there is no brass cover on it. And the only reason that they made them with brass covers years and years ago is because they were able to stamp out thousands of hubcaps before the stamping molds went bad. With the molds today, I can produce a lot of hubcaps without the moldings going bad. And we also stamp with a heavier piece of metal." Because of Bill's excellent work, judges don't deduct points when people enter their cars into competitive shows.

Bill started manufacturing hubcaps for '38s because of the demand. Initially, he opted to make the hubcaps because nobody else was making '38s. "Instead of competing with guys that made '37, '39, '41 and '50 Buick hubcaps, I decided to make '38s. There was a long period of time that I didn't make the '38's until the demand started getting stronger and stronger." Ultimately, Bill's customers are very content with his work, happily driving down the

road with a new set of hubcaps, not unlike a happy pedestrian strolling down the lane in a smart pair of new shoes. 



Repro



Original

You can find new reproduction hubs for your '38 at
Bill Hirsch Automotive
 396 Littleton Ave.
 Newark, NJ 07103
 1-800-828-2061
www.hirschauto.com



TECHNICAL TIPS

VACUUM STARTER

FIX

Story and Photos by Mark Jordan (#1297)

When I bought my car several years ago, the first thing to go out was the vacuum starter switch. So, I did the quick fix of attaching it to a button under the dashboard. Recently, I wanted to put it back to the original starting system, so I ordered a reconditioned vacuum switch from Bob's Automobilia. At first, it seemed to work just fine, but at times I would step on the gas pedal to start up the engine and nothing would happen. At first I thought that something was wrong with my vacuum system, so I checked all of my seals and connections and nothing was wrong. After scratching my head for a while I noticed that if I were to go under the hood and tap on the vacuum starter it would shoot right off.



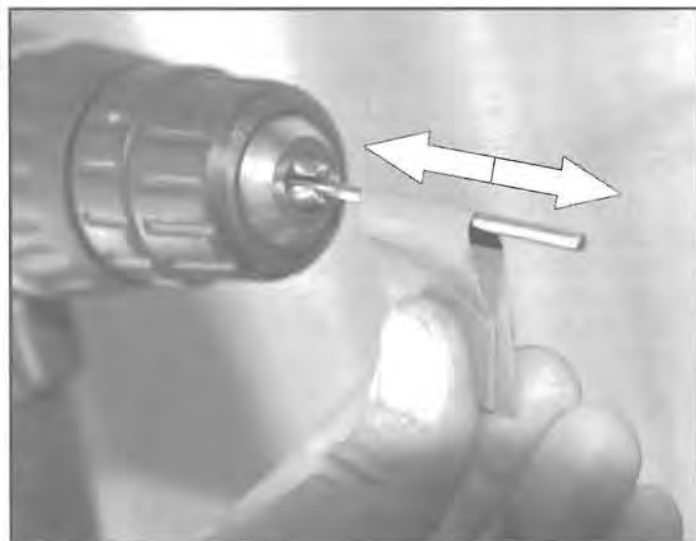
After eliminating most, if not all, of the obvious causes, I then took off the switch and noticed that the rod that shoots into the vacuum switch, to turn it on, had some major grooves and scratches in it where it had been moving in and out for the past sixty years. So, I figured that the rod was getting hung up on entering the starting switch.

To fix this remove the rod by pulling it straight out. Then place the end that points into the starter into a drill. Using 400-grit sandpaper, hold it around the rod, put one finger on the drill switch, start the drill turning, and move the sand paper back and forth. Constant motion is necessary, so



the surface is kept even. As you notice the grooves disappearing, change to finer 600-grit sandpaper, and then to 1500-grit sandpaper until, the rod is completely smooth. After sanding the rod smooth, polish it with a good cleaner like Brasso. Reinsert and place the starter switch back on.

There can be many problems with the vacuum starter, and this is one I had not seen before, but after I performed this procedure, I've had no hang-ups starting my Buick.



ADS FOR CLUB MEMBERS ARE FREE!

After your ad has appeared once, the *Torque Tube* will rerun it one more time if you ask. The best way is to e-mail or mail your ad. Inquire about our business ad rates.

Mark Jordan: 415-203-4180—torquetube3738@yahoo.com

Our organization encourages membership in the Buick Club of America. Information on membership can be obtained by calling 614-472-3939 or e-mail bcaoffice@buickclub.org.

PARTS FOR SALE

1937 grille *shell* in vg condition, \$500
1937 grille set, needs re-chroming, \$200
1938 grille *shell* in vg condition, \$500
1938 front fenders, excellent condition, \$500- \$1,000 pr.
1938 grille, left half, good condition, \$150
1938 Special hood, vg condition, \$100
1938 Special hood side panels, vg condition, \$100 set
1938 deck lid, good condition, \$100
1937-38 doors, many, what do you need? \$100 ea.
1937-38 bumpers vg condition, \$100 ea.
Misc. heads for both series engines, \$95
Small series engines, \$100-\$300
Lots of '37-'38 parts. All prices, plus S & H

Lloyd Ikerd (#1612) 949-640-8200
elzfargo@msn.com

Piston rings for a 40 series, 1938-style pistons. They are standard size. \$80.

William Schwantes (#878)
9973 County Valley, Glen Haven, WI 53810
608-794-2406

'38 grille good condition, \$225 for pair
New '38 pistons .040 oversize, \$175
One set of insert-type rods for the big engine, \$200
One set of insert-type rods for the small engine, \$175
'37 & '38 master cylinder cores for Special, \$25 each
Shipping extra.

Bob Pipkin (#76) 503-363-4712
bcpip@mailstation.com

Two 16-inch wheels for a 1938 Buick Special. Will accept best offer. Good condition. Needs to be refinished.

Rick Yost (#1704) 805-374-9093
rednyld@aol.com

1938 Parts

Roadmaster doors, front & back exc...\$20 ea.
Inside garnish molding except windshield...\$30
O.S.S.S. molding except hood, all...\$40
Radio...\$150
Special hood top & sides...\$100
Roadmaster wheel fender, poor shape with brackets...\$250
Used piston & rods...\$10 ea.
Rear window shade roller & brackets...\$20

J.W. Pascoe (#881)
906-786-4322

1938 Roadmaster Parts

Bumper brackets...\$100 set
Gas tank straps...\$40 pr.
Headlight housings...\$20 ea.
Hood sides...\$125 pr.
Hood side stainless...\$40 pr.
Hood top pieces...\$150 pr.
Mudguard (inside rear fender)...\$40
Nose piece (sheet metal)...\$45
Radiator "U" with headlight panels...\$75
Rear window reveal moldings (exterior)...\$50 pr.
Running boards (3sets) prices per set...\$60-
\$180
Running board brackets (bd blstd & primed)...
\$50
-Shipping and handling extra

Bill Rossiter (#947) 16165 Reiner Cir.
Riverside, CA 92504, 951-789-0022

1937 Buick Roadmaster 81 4-dr Sedan
Fenders, nose sheet metal, grille, doors, trunk lid, frame, etc. Call or e-mail me with needs.

Jim Garrett (#1826) Hollis, ME
207-929-8035 patjim@sacoriver.net

Snap rings for '38 rear shock absorber upper mount:
FREE pair to next 9 persons who send
SASE to

Paul DeLucchi (#1246)
470 Lombard St.
San Francisco, CA 94133

1937 Roadmaster sedan passenger side front fender—nice
shape, one minor crease...\$125
One gas cap, nice condition...\$5
Bumper guard needs rechrome ...\$7
Voltage regular n.o.s. criterion brand in original box...\$35
Please add 15% for shipping

Lewis Cohen (#584) 58 North Racebrook Rd.
Woodbridge, CT 06525, 203-397-8723

1937 Buick Special Parts For Sale

Rear shocks (pair), good+...\$150
Bell housing cover...\$15
Fan blade...\$10
Fan pulley...\$8
Front spindles (pair), exc...\$100
Grille (repo) left side nose...\$125
Front ashtray...\$10
Water pump (needs rebuild)...\$25
Sun visor chrome bracket (left), very good...\$20
Robe rope escutons good...\$10 pr.
6V defroster or heater motor (n.o.s.r./new)...\$15 ea.
Heater/defroster switch (taupe), lights up, after
market...\$10
Map light...\$5
Trunk emblem license plate glass (clear)...\$10
Set engine pans (pair) very good...\$50
New 50 cp bulbs for headlights...\$12 pr.
New 50 cp bulbs for driving lights...\$12 pr.
32 cp headlight bulbs...\$5 pr.
32 cp Driving light bulbs...\$5 pr.
Wheel hubcap clips, N.O.S....call
Tail lights complete, good...\$65 pr.
Torque tube...\$100
Differential gears, complete...\$125

Axles (pair), good...\$75
Front brake drums...\$35 ea.
Rear brake drums...\$35 ea.
Used brake shoes, good...\$30 pr.
Radiator, good core needs minor repairs...\$100
Dash, good...\$75
Garnish moldings for four-door...call
Rims 16" (3), good...\$45 ea.
Oil pan...\$25
Lifter cover...\$25
Lifter assembly...\$40
Headlight bucket (left)...\$25
Steering column...\$75
Front wheel bearing, 2 sets, used, very good...\$35 pr.
Brake backer plates...\$20 ea.

The larger, heavier items below I will not ship, but I
will be willing to bring them to 2005 BCA Nationals.

Transmission...\$125 Block...\$100 Head...\$75
Crank...\$50 Nose assembly...\$125

Jerry Root (#422)
71 South Pollard Drive, Fulton, NY 13069
315-598-2319 buickboy@twcnny.rr.com

1938 Buick Special Parts
Rims (5) 16" black with white stripes, including
beauty rims and hub caps...\$350
Straight-8 engine and transmission, approx. 69,000
miles, good cond...\$1200
Rear axle and front axle...\$350

Will not ship parts, but open to offers.

Chris McLaughlin (#1632)
53 Church St., Stonington, CT 06378
860-460-0767 chm@terrafirmaus.com

'37 N.O.S. oil gauge...\$35
'37 N.O.S. amp gauge...\$35
'37 N.O.S. throw out bearing retainer ...\$25
'37 & '38 Horn ring...\$100
'37 & '38 Special sparkplug cover, mint...\$75
'37 & '38 Century running board cores, solid...
\$300
'38 N.O.S. throw out bearing...\$50
'38 N.O.S. vacuum starter switch...\$95
'38 N.O.S. oil filter cap...\$15
'38 N.O.S. Special throttle rod, carb to pedal...\$35

'38 Bumper badge - needs chrome...\$100
'38 sharks-tooth grill guard, rechromed...\$250
'38 fold-down trunk handle guard rechromed...
\$350
'38 Century rims...\$100
'38 Century rear end, complete...\$700
'38 grill rechromed...\$300
Please call with your other needs

Dave Tacheny (#997)
763-427-3460

1936 Buick Special Coupe
completely rebuilt engine

2 transmissions
4 mounted tires with tubes
2 radiators

Complete nose and grille, with hood and side panels

Original rubber floor mat

Set of 2 door handles, inside and outside

New set of outside rear-view mirrors

New original exhaust tips

2 bumpers

4 new hubcaps '36 or '37

1 new hood ornament

2 original fog lights

2 original taillights

2 original headlight glass lenses

Set of all original glass windows/windshield

Original steering wheel and column

2 original clocks

Original chrome wheel trim rings

2 original dime lights

4 original parking lights

Original side hood vent pieces

Original vent windows with frames and glass

Chrome turn signal unit (after-market)

Original gas tank

1 pr. running boards

1937 Buick Special Coupe

1 pr. running boards, with new rubber covers
(installed on the wrong sides, but easily re-installed properly)

1 pr. headlight buckets

Original windshield wiper vacuum motor

Original 4.40/1 rear axle ring and pinion gear with driveshaft.

Original 3-speed transmission

Original steering wheel

Original dome light

Chrome turn signal unit (after-market)

Original intake and exhaust manifolds, with rebuilt Stromberg carburetor and linkage, exhaust riser, valve works

6.50x16" Firestone bias-ply tires, in very good condition; with tubes

(New set of 4 WWW, with original black spare)

Original 6-volt starter motor

Original 6-volt generator

Original split front bench seat, with new beige cloth and vinyl upholstery

1 pr. original door handles, one locking original trunk handle

Jerry Maak (#1812) 343 Eastern St.

New Haven, CT 06513

Phone: 203-468-9880 Cell: 203-687-7649

aurhaus@yahoo.com

N.O.S. 1937-1938 Buick Parts

1937

Front lower motor mount...\$15

40 ser. 2nd speed gear...\$45

40 ser. main drive gear...\$45

40, 60 ser. differential bevel side gears...\$20 ea.

40, 60 ser. locking door handle, 1st type w/offset shank...\$30 ea.

40 ser. steering gear pitman arm...\$30

1938

40 ser. clutch release rod adjustment nut...\$4

License plate lamp lens...\$4

Temperature gauge assembly...\$100

80, 90 ser. pitman arm...\$30

Right taillight door, used...\$10

80, 90 ser. differential side gear bevel thrust washers...\$3 ea.

40, 60 ser. outer tie rod ends, n.o.r.s...\$20 ea.

1937-1938

40, 60 left front shock absorber...\$125

40 ser. transmission 2nd and 3rd speed shifter

yoke...\$15

40 ser. transmission reverse idler gear thrust washers...\$3 ea.

40, 60 ser. pinion bearing locknut...\$3

40 ser. intake, exhaust valves, specify...\$8 ea.

Rear-axle pinion-bearing lock screw...\$1

40, 60 pitman shaft bushings...\$15 pair

Headlight dimmer switch, n.o.r.s...\$10

80 ser. outer front wheel bearing...\$25 ea.

40, 60 ser. intermediate steering arm bearing kit, n.o.r.s...\$30 ea.

Outside door handles, used. 3", 3 5/16" shafts, 4 15/16", 5 1/4", 5 1/2" tall...\$10 ea.

40, 60 ser. left steering knuckle with bushings...\$40

40, 60 lower outer pivot pin kit, n.o.r.s...\$25 ea.

Ignition point set...\$7 ea.

All parts n.o.s. except as noted. Add 15%.
\$3.50 min. postage

Bob Graves (#1136) 21 Ferry Rd.

Salisbury, MA 01952, 978-463-0715

'37 Buick Century fenders, good condition...\$50
plus S & H. Call for further information.

Dick Schnitzer (#1393) 248-685-2829
mschnit354@comcast.net

1937-1938 Parts for Sale

- '37 repro, silkscreen glass speedometer, radio and clock...\$100
- New '38 Century Stainless "hood hinge"...\$175
- S/M badges Buick...\$65
- '38 Century hood sides, left and right...\$150
- '38 Century hood, left side only...\$75
- '38 Century hood sides, left and right...\$150
- '38 Century hood side, right only...\$50
- '38 Century hood side vent, right and left...\$75
- '38 Century hood stainless...\$75
- '38 Century hood lock mechanism...\$50
- Large series fuel pump rebuilt...\$75

- '38 Special hood, right and left, with hinge...\$150
- '38 Special hood sides, right and left...\$150
- '38 Special hood stainless, left and right...\$120
- '38 Special tail lights, pair...\$75
- '38 Special front suspension, hub to hub...\$200
- Large series dual carb manifold...\$250
- "Y" pipe to create dual exhaust...\$50
- '38 repro grill, left and right, cast aluminum...\$250
- '38 Special radiator...\$75
- '38 heater...\$50

Shipping will be added to all purchased parts and is not included in price above.

Rod Phillips (#1644) 913-481-6763

- '38 N.O.S. right grille half, not plated, excellent...\$190
- '37 & '38 N.O.S. grille bug screen w/Buick logo & hardware...\$180
- '38 Battery lock with key, excellent...\$54
- '37 & '38 sidemount lock with key...\$65
- '37 & '38 N.O.S. sideview mirror w/ thermometer (non-convertible)...\$225
- '37 & '38 N.O.S. Delco coil...\$95
- '37 & '38 N.O.S. Delco voltage reg...\$175
- '37 & '38 guide headlight lenses (pair left & right)...\$255
- '37 & '38 ignition switch box, good, used...\$40
- '37 bronze ashtray with front end casting of car N.O.S....\$215
- '37 three vibrant color posters 21"/16", full color, rare & frameable...\$50
- '37 & '38 Buick Safety Legion license tag metal badge, original...\$75
- '37 & '38 N.O.S. gas tank door lock, in box with key and instructions...\$83
- '38 Clock deletion plate, engraved with Buick 8...\$75

- '37 & '38 Fulton interior rearview mirror green flip down lense...\$57
- '38 to '40 Series 80/90 master cyl. kit Delco, N.O.S., rare...\$70
- '38 instrument cluster original, exc., complete...\$300
- '38 radio with knobs, not tested but complete and excellent...\$270
- '37 & '38 Red Crown air stem caps, set of four...\$12
- '37 & '38 cowl mount antenna, N.O.S., all mounting and leads, exc...\$167
- '38 Buick Announcement Magazine, full color foldout, all models...\$185
- '37 & '38 Convertible rearview mirror...\$260
- '37 & '38 instrument light and map light switch original...\$55
- '37 & '38 16-inch series 80/90 wheels, exc...\$400, set of four

**Vince Truant (#1220)
1537 Charmuth Road
Lutherville, MD 21093**



1938 Buick Special 248 C.I. Motor and Transmission

Less than 1000 miles since total rebuild. Everything new: valves, hardened seats, valve guides and springs, pistons, rings, timing gears and chain, 6-blade fan. Rebuilt starter, solenoid, generator, carburetor, water pump and transmission. A totally complete rebuild. It was done by Jim at Swanson's in Sacramento, CA. \$4800.

Randy Lancaster 530-644-2274

PARTS WANTED

1937 horn ring for steering wheel

David Watson
(#1863)
250-753-2997

The mechanism that holds the trunk open on a '37 series 41 trunkback

Tim Henderson
(#1766)
352-527-6670

1937 or 1938 Special/Century Convertible 4-door Sedan

Front seat in good sound condition to re-upholster
2 removable door posts for top, solid rechromable
2 front window frames, solid rechromable (front door)
4-door Garnish mouldings, solid rechromable
Top prices paid for good solid parts. No junk

John Sauers, 620 Wright Loop
Williamstown, NJ 08094

1937-38 Buick rumble seat complete, or hardware to build one, including deck lid, seat brackets, etc.

Lloyd Ikerds (#1612)
949-640-8200

Complete rebuildable 1937 special engine and transmission. *Torque Tube* magazines dating between 1983 and July 1984, volume II issues 2,3,4,5,6,7

Frank Freda (#1838)
frankfreda@cox.net
805-969-7500

Period and correct spot light for a '38 Buick.
Heavy duty oil bath air cleaner for '37 Limited

Wayne Miller (#1870)
2211 W. 500 N.
Warsaw, IN 46582

1937 Buick horn ring for a banjo wheel

David Watson (#1863)
Canada
250-753-2997

Windshield wiper transmissions for a 1938 90L

Jan Burry (#1478)
315 Manitou St.
Northfield, MN 55057
507-663-0931

Two side mount thread covers stainless steel trim pieces for a 1938 Buick Special. I believe the 1936 thru 1938 Buicks trim pieces will work. Or has anyone figured out a substitute?

Herbert Sutton (#4)
3760 Cleveland Hill Rd. Roseburg, OR 97470
541-672-8414/ lrose@mcsi.net

CARS FOR SALE

1937 Buick Special For Sale

Model 44-2-door fastback
All original. Have original bill of sale, 69,400 miles
New: rings and valves, tires, brakes, master brake cylinder, radiator, and exhaust system.
Front end rebuilt. Carburetor rebuilt.
Tan interior—original. Excellent running condition.
Needs paint job
\$9,500.00

Michael Goeb
(#1583)
12339 Lake Valley Dr.
Clermont, FL 34711

352-243-4568



1937 Buick Limited Model 91



Body off, ground up restoration, dual side mounts, tripp lights. Black enamel paint, all glass replaced & tinted; gray broadcloth and Bedford cord interior, gray carpet. Turn signals incorporated into fender lights, also tail lights. New wiring harness throughout. Steering wheel remolded, horn ring rechromed. Entire body insulated; dash and all window moldings woodgrained. Converted to 12-volt system, pusher fan, new electronic ignition;

gel cell battery. Four new radial wide-whitewall tires (150 miles on them), also new tires in side mounts (never on the ground). 3.40 to 1 third member. All new after-market gauges, antique white faces, gold bezels. AM/FM stereo CD player, plus four speakers. Seat belts, 4 places. Engine and trans rebuilt, engine balanced, bored .060 over, head milled .070, ported polished. RV cam, hydraulic lifters, hard seats. Dome pistons; oil filter, 1941 Buick dual exhaust, 4 barrel Edelbrock 600 CFM carb. on 1952 manifold. Remolded running boards; all chrome redone; dual Buick side mirrors. 7,904 miles since body-off restoration. Entire chassis has been powder coated black. Cruises at 70 mph easy. Owner's manual, shop manual, revision manual, salesman's book, showroom catalog showing all models for 1937, all included. Not included in selling price are many extra parts for 1937 Buick series 90, to be sold separately. A parts list is available on request. Health forces sale. Offered at \$32,000.

Jack Corliss BCA #6932, 37-38 #279
530-470-9197 - teabag@theunion.net

1937 Special
 Approx. 63,000 original miles, engine never overhauled, 80% restored with many extras, original hubcaps and new wiring harness
 Newport, RI

Richard Vaillan Court (#1171)
401-849-7899 401-241-3753



For Sale 1938 Century Sport Coupe 66S series.
 The car is beautifully restored, dark blue, height of Art Deco. Lost storage and has to sell.
 Asking \$25,500

Howard De Rusha (#689)
425-239-0913

1938 series 60 Century sedan, 107,000 original miles.

The bottom and gas tank have been cleaned. No rust on the bottom, but small areas of rust on the bottoms of the rear fenders, running boards, and the panel below the trunk lid. The brakes are done, also rebuilt carb., new radiator and water pump. Radio is done, dash is redone in original "chevron pattern." I love the car, it runs great at 60 mph, but it is too much work for me.

Frank Tarpey (#1762) 847-432-2622. Can e-mail photos at ftarpey2002@yahoo.com



1938 Buick Special Model 41

Good solid car, many new parts. All new rubber tires—gaskets, running boards, bumpers rechromed, Hampton Coach interior.
 \$6800

Lawrence Chase (#1091)
603-224-9855

1937 Buick Limited

90 Series
 8 Passenger with jump seats

Frank Cwikla (#1111)
608-547-9039 cell
608-339-6297 home

1938 Century 4-door in restorable condition. Some parts missing, may part out. \$2000

J.W. Pascoe (#881)
906-786-4322

1937 Buick Special
Model 44 - 2-door fastback, all original. Have original bill of sale, 69,400 miles.

New: Rings and valves, tires, brakes, master brake cylinder, radiator, and exhaust system. Front end rebuilt. Carburetor rebuilt. Tan interior - original. Excellent running condition. Needs paint job \$9,500

Michael Goeb (#1583)
12339 Lake Valley Drive
Clermont, FL 34711
352-243-4568
mpgoeb@earthlink.net

1937 Buick 91 Limited
The car is completely disassembled, but is all there.

All parts boxed and numbered.

The car is solid with very little rust, no major problems. Stored 60 miles east of Dallas, TX. Will take best offer, I lost interest and work place.

Bob Flechtner (#1792)
5608 Encore, Dallas, TX 75240
Bob@Padgett.com
207-338-0832

1969 Buick Electra 225 Convertible
New: drums, brakes, brake lines
Motor rebuilt, not installed
2 complete motors and transmissions
30 years same owner, not assembled.
Black exterior, red interior

Too many parts to list. \$3,200.00 (does not include delivery)

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